(e) the innovative steps taken or to be taken to improve these sectors to help the common man to reap more benefits?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI SU. THIRUNAVUKKARASAR): (a) Yes, Sir. The exploitation of ICT opportunities is an on-going process and the country is fully geared to exploit opportunities of ICT developments.

(b) The Indian software industry is likely to achieve a turnover of Rs. 60,000 crores during 2002-03.

As on 31st January 2003, 511.34 lakhs telephone connections were working in the country.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) India has the second largest telecom network in Asia after China and the seventh largest in the world.

(e) Innovative steps are regularly taken to improve the telecom sector to help the common man to reap more or rich benefits by suitable technological up gradation of telecom network from time to time.

Funds for Telecom Network

2346. PROF. M.M. AGARWAL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the funds allocated/released/utilized during the last three years for promotion, development, expansion and upgradation of telecommunication networks in the rural areas of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Orissa, Uttaranchal, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh and North-Eastern Region;

(b) whether Government have made any plan for development, expansion and upgradation of telecommunication systems in the rural areas of these States; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN): (a) The details of funds allocated/released/ utilized for promotion development, expansion & upgradation of Telecommunication Network in the Rural Areas of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Orissa, Uttaranchal, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh and North Eastern Region during the last three years are furnished below:—

(In Crores of Rupees)

Sl. No.	Name of the Circle	1999-00		2000-01		2001-02	
		Allocated	Released & Utilized	Allocated	Released & Utilized	Allocated	Released & Utilsed
1	Uttar Pradesh	137.51	133.51	401.24	427.98	456.07	605.94
2	Bihar	69.30	70.90	151.16	144.22	165.86	191.09
3	Madhya Pradesh	129.17	64.95	157.02	163.36	177.57	156.92
4	Rajasthan	125.88	136.28	177.08	118.04	283.32	309.43
5	Orissa	44.36	44.62	60.30	68.83	120.75	144.58
6	Uttaranchal*	—	—	—	—	58.71	85.11
7	Jharkhand* (**)	—	—	—	—	—	—
8	Chhattisgarh	—	—	—	—	60.60	52.69
9	North Eastern Region	51.63	44.98	67.12	34.73	82.26	73.58

* Uttaranchal, Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh Circles were formed in the month of January, 2001 and allocation'released/utilization of funds was made through Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Madhya Pradesh Circles respectively.

** Entire area of Jharkhand is Tribal Area an hence no allotment/ expenditure is made under Rural Area. The amount allotted for Jharkhand was Rs. 390 crores and released/utilized was Rs. 392.06 crores in the year 2001-2002.

(b) and (c) BSNL's plans for development, expansion and up-gradation of Telecommunication System in the Rural Areas of these States during 2002-2003 is as follows:—

Sl. No.	Name of Circle	Total DEL Target	Total DELs provided upto January, 2003
1	Uttar Pradesh	75,886	186,881
2	Bihar	63,411	61,333
3	Madhya Pradesh	24,049	21,233
4	Rajasthan	60,304	47,043
5	Orissa	36,037	38,310
6	Uttaranchal	43,662	7,331
7	Jharkhand	28,760	14,628
8	Chhattisgarh	10,742	14,560
9	North Eastern Region	27,450	26,247

The expansion program for the future period shall be based on availability of funds including Government support for unremunerative activities.

Changes in National Telecom Policy

2347. SHRI SANJAY NIRUPAM: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether his Ministry has formulated a lot of changes in the National Telecom Policy 1999 during the last three years; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the purpose behind that?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

Impact of Trai's Decision on Mibile Services

2348. SHRI VIJAY SINGH YADAV: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the recent determination of TRAI, has made the poor man's mobile expensive by equating interconnect charges resulting in same cost for providing the services for GSM as well as CDMA;